

**Department of Family Administration
Administrative Office of the Courts**

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA) GRANT FUNDS

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

Issue Date: May 1, 2007

Proposals Due: May 30, 2007

General Information

The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program was authorized to operate in Maryland subject to approved Rules and Guidelines, by the adoption in 1989, Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, Section 3-830. The Annotated Code of Maryland states that the role of the Court Appointed Special Advocate is to:

1. Provide the court with background information to aid the court in making decisions in the child's best interest; and
2. Ensure that the child is provided appropriate case planning and services.

The CASA volunteer is considered a friend of the court and does not have party status. The Volunteer is considered an agent of the court and is appointed at the judge's discretion to represent the child's best interests. Volunteers are not represented by an attorney but should be provided access to legal counsel by the program.

The Department of Family Administration at the Administrative Office of the Courts is requesting applications for CASA Grants. Subject to the provision of funds for Fiscal Year 2008, grants will be awarded to applicable programs which enhance the experience of families and children involved with Maryland's legal system. Previously funded programs must have submitted all outstanding reports prior to this grant's submission deadline.

Funding Priorities

Applications submitted should depict programs that have a demonstrated need within the community that is to be served and are services that will be complimentary to those provided by the court. Priority will be given to the continuation of projects currently funded through the Department of Family Administration CASA Grants. Grants are also available to a steering committee, community organization, or court in which there is not presently a CASA program. These groups are eligible to apply for a one-time planning grant from the Department of Family Administration. All groups are to work in conjunction with the Maryland CASA Association when contemplating starting a program for a jurisdiction.

Eligible Grantees

Eligible grantees include a steering committee, community organization, local courts, court-related agencies, and nonprofit service providers.

Funding Cycle

Grant awards will be made to fund projects during the period from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008. The availability of funds for this program is contingent upon the provision of funds in the Maryland Judiciary budget by the Maryland General Assembly for Fiscal Year 2008. **Awards will be announced in June 2007.**

Application Instructions

Applications and grant guidelines can be found at www.courts.state.md.us/family or can be obtained by calling (410) 260-1580.

Note: In applying for CASA Grant funds, applicants agree to abide by the Fiscal Year 2008 Grant Guidelines

Applications are due on or before 5:00 p.m. on May 30, 2007 and should be directed to:

Pamela Cardullo Ortiz
Executive Director
Department of Family Administration
Administrative Office of the Courts
580 Taylor Avenue, Wing A
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Submit **one original plus eight (8) copies. Faxed or e-mailed applications will not be accepted.**

Technical Assistance

For further information regarding this notice of funding or the application process, please contact Pamela Cardullo Ortiz, Executive Director, Department of Family Administration, at (410) 260-1580.